

Register results

The following actions have been taken by Federal agencies. They have been summarized previously in CONSUMER REGISTER as proposals. Extent of consumer comment is indicated when such information is available.

• **Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** has adopted voluntary guidelines for doctors & other professionals on the use of protective shields over testicles & ovaries during x-ray examinations. FDA received 29 comments on the proposed guidelines from doctors, radiological physicists & technologists, lawyers & consumers. Most commenters were in favor of the protective shields. Included in the comments were recommendations to shield other radiation-sensitive areas, such as thyroid, bone marrow & developing fetus. Details—*Federal Register*: July 23, page 30327; Sept. 16, 1975, page 42749. CONSUMER REGISTER: Oct. 15, 1975.

• **Postal Service (PS)** has adopted regulations informing postal personnel that consumers do not have to receive advertisements considered to be "erotically arousing or sexually provocative." PS received no written objections to the proposal. Details—*Federal Register*: July 28, page 31380; June 18, page 24726. CONSUMER REGISTER: July 15.

Energy conservation programs

Community Services Administration (CSA) has revised its regulations & grant procedures to help low income & elderly consumers reduce energy consumption & lessen the impact of high energy costs.

Some of the programs being undertaken (mostly through CSA's regional offices) are:

- **Weatherization.** According to CSA, one of the greatest areas of energy waste is in the heating of buildings, which accounts for 25% of all the energy used in this country. Before insulating floors, installing storm windows & other obvious remedies for energy waste, the first steps in weatherizing older houses are to replace broken windows & plug holes. CSA estimates that by fall, 150,000 homes will have been repaired by work crews consisting mostly of low income persons.

- **Crisis intervention.** This is essentially restoring service (gas, oil, electricity) where such service has been turned off due to failure to pay utility bills.

- **Consumer information, education & legal assistance.** This includes representing the interests of the poor in proceedings involving energy policy & utility rate structures.

- **Alternate energy sources.** This includes exploring the use of solar & other power.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 15, page 29125.

Right-turn-on-red

Aug. 26 is deadline for comments on **Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA)** interim national policy allowing cars to make right turns at red (RTOR) traffic signals. Cars would first have to stop & yield right-of-way to other cars & pedestrians.

This policy implements the Energy Policy & Conservation Act of 1975 that requires state energy conservation plans to include "a traffic law or regulation which, to the maximum extent practicable consistent with safety, permits . . . turning right at a red stop light after stopping." States must be in compliance by Dec. 31, 1977, to be eligible for Federal funds. All states already permit RTOR in various situations, but FHWA says uniformity is needed [CONSUMER NEWS: June 1].

FHWA's study on RTOR concluded that RTOR:

- Reduces delay for nearly all conditions.
- Increases intersection capacity.
- Saves gas & reduces auto emissions.
- Results in a insignificant number of accidents.

Guidelines specify exceptions to RTOR where (1) sight distance of cars approaching from the left is limited; (2) intersection has more than 4 approaches; (3) there is an exclusive pedestrian phase during which pedestrians can cross all crosswalks; & (4)

intersection is within 61 meters (200 feet) of a railroad grade crossing.

Other prohibitions may apply in situations where pedestrians are significantly inconvenienced by RTOR, accidents are excessive & large numbers of school children cross intersections.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 12, page 28477. Send comments to Federal Highway Administration, Room 4230, Washington, DC 20590.

Solar

Aug. 27 is deadline for comments on **Housing & Urban Development Dept.'s (HUD)** intermediate property standards for solar space & hot water heating systems. Standards would apply to one & 2-family housing as well as multifamily housing.

Copies of the intermediate standard may be obtained from Solar Energy Program, Room 8158, Housing & Urban Development Dept., Washington, DC 20410.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 12, page 28570. Send comments to Rules Docket Clerk, Housing & Urban Development Dept., Washington, DC 20410.

Hypoallergenic cosmetics (more)

Sept. 3 is the date **Food & Drug Administration's (FDA)** labeling requirements for "hypoallergenic" cosmetics go into effect. Regulation specifies the conditions under which a cosmetic may be labeled hypoallergenic—such as requiring dermatological testing before such claims can be made.

Labeling requirements were scheduled to become effective July 7, 1975, but a court case had to be settled first. FDA now says any further delay is not in the public interest & that consumer confusion over hypoallergenic claims should end.

Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 4, page 32583; July 28, 1975, page 31606; June 6, 1975, page 24442; Feb. 25, 1974, page 7288. CONSUMER REGISTER: July 1, 1975; April 15, 1974.

Room air conditioners

Sept. 10 is deadline for comments on **Federal Energy Administration's (FEA)** proposed test procedures used to measure energy efficiency or energy consumption of room air conditioners.

Proposal implements a section of the Energy Policy & Conservation Act that requires FEA & **National Bureau of Stand-**

ards (NBS) to develop test procedures in determining annual operating costs of 10 types of products, including room air conditioners. (FEA is delaying proposed test procedures for the other 9 types.) These procedures will be used by **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** in prescribing product labeling rules. Labels will give consumers energy information they need to have before making an informed judgment on the purchase of appliances.

Proposed test procedures for room air conditioners measure cooling capacity in British thermal units (BTUs) per hour under certain conditions. Estimated average annual operating costs, energy efficiency ratio (EER) & average annual energy consumption are determined by various formulas.

FEA is also interested in receiving comments on other useful measures of energy consumption.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 27, page 31237; May 14, page 19977. **CONSUMER REGISTER**: June 1. Send comments to Executive Communications, Room 3309, Federal Energy Administration, Box 1B, Washington, DC 20461. Identify comments on envelope as "Room Air Conditioners—Proposed Test Procedures."

Mammography

Bureau of Radiological Health (BRH) wants information to help it develop proposed recommendations for minimizing unnecessary radiation exposure from mammography (x-ray examination of the breast).

Because many doctors routinely use this method to detect breast cancer, a large number of female adults may be subject to significant radiation exposure during their lives. [Some experts feel that such routine use of x-rays should not be used on symptom-free women under the age of 50; others are reluctant to discontinue a program that detects early curable breast cancer.]

BRH is encouraging all diagnostic x-ray facilities to put quality assurance programs into effect. BRH will put together a report on mammography techniques.

Sept. 10 is deadline for comments.

Details—*Federal Register*: June 10, page 23447. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food & Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852. To receive copies of draft recommendations, reports & other documents distributed for review during development of mammography technique information report, write to Bureau of Radiological Health, Food & Drug Administration, above address.

About recalls (continued)

Sept. 29 is new deadline for comments on **Food & Drug Administration's (FDA)** proposed regulations on policies & procedures to be followed in product recalls under FDA's jurisdiction. American Bakers Association asked for more time to comment.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 22, page 30136. **CONSUMER REGISTER**: July 15. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Food & Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852.

Poultry sausage

Oct. 25 is deadline for comments on **Agriculture Dept's** proposal to establish standards for cooked sausage (hot dogs, bologna & knockwurst) made from poultry.

Poultry industry has asked Agriculture to establish standards for these sausage products to assure uniformity & consistency. A survey indicated that there are at least 344 approved labels for poultry sausage products that are produced by 66 plants. Products with such labels as "Turkey Franks" & "Chicken Weiners" are gaining consumer acceptance.

Proposed standard limits the amount of fat permitted in the finished product (25%), sets a minimum amount of protein (12%) & requires that labels tell if giblets are included in making the product. A listing of the kind of binders used (such as dried skim milk, soy protein concentrate & vegetable starch) would also be required.

Details—*Federal Register*: July 27, page 31226. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250.

Meetings

• **CONTACT ADHESIVES—Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** announces public meeting on the flammability of contact bonding cements:

9 a.m., August 23 & 24
General Services Administration Auditorium
18th & F Sts. NW, Washington, DC

Details—*Federal Register*: July 29, page 31612.

• **ROOM AIR CONDITIONERS—Federal Energy Administration (FEA)** announces a public hearing on proposed test procedures to measure energy efficiency of room air conditioners:

9:30 a.m., Sept. 10
Room 2105, 2000 M St. NW, Washington, DC

Details—*Federal Register*: July 27, page 31237.

• **LEAD POISONING—Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** announces public hearing on the dangers of lead in paint:

9 a.m., Sept. 13-14
General Services Administration Auditorium
18th & F Sts. NW, Washington, DC.

Standards

• **PINEAPPLE JUICE—Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** has revised its standards of identity & quality for canned pineapple juice. New standards will permit use of concentrated pineapple juice in preparation of canned juice & labeled "pineapple juice from concentrate." Details—*Federal Register*: May 28, page 21768.

• **FROZEN STRAWBERRIES—Aug. 31** is deadline for comments on **Agriculture Dept.'s** proposal to revise its standards for grades of frozen strawberries. Since the last major change in standards, new varieties of strawberries have been developed. Proposal revises requirements on color & provides for "halved" berries as a new style that has become popular. Proposal also further restricts the maximum allowance for mushy strawberries in the sliced style. Details—*Federal Register*: July 9, page 28291. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250.

This listing, prepared by Marion Q. Ciaccio, is intended only as summary coverage of selected *Federal Register* items deemed of particular interest to consumers, & it does not affect the legal status or effect of any document required or authorized to be published pursuant to Section 5 of Federal Register Act as amended, 44 U.S.C. 1505. *Federal Register* is published Monday through Friday (except Federal Government holidays) by **Office of the Federal Register, National Archives & Records Service, General Services Administration**. Subscription is \$5 a month or \$50 a year & may be ordered from **Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office**, Washington, DC 20402. Superintendent also sells copies of *Federal Register* for 75¢ each. Free copies of *Federal Register* may be available in libraries.

For you

These forms are for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on any Federal Agency proposal summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER. Of course, if you cannot get your comments on the front & back of a form, feel free to continue your comments on additional paper.

Send comment forms to addresses listed in the summaries.

CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with **Food & Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

This is my opinion on (title of item in CONSUMER REGISTER) _____
by (name of agency) _____
published in *Federal Register* on (date) _____ on (page) _____

Name _____ Date _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(over)

Rate Register

Trains

• **National Railroad Passenger Corp.** (Amtrak) is reducing the cost of its domestic USA Rail pass as much as 34%, effective Sept. 8 & continuing through May 15, 1977. Passes are good for unlimited coach travel on most Amtrak trains. Fares will be: (1) travel up to 14 days: \$165; (2) travel up to 21 days: \$220; (3) travel up to 30 days: \$275.

Fares for overseas USA Rail passes, which may be sold only to visitors from foreign countries, will cost the same as domestic fares, representing an increase of from \$15 to \$25.

Natural gas

• On July 29, **Federal Power Commission (FPC)** increased the rates gas producers may charge pipelines for new gas. However, the increases, which ranged from 3 to 2 times higher than the amount charged previously [RATE REGISTER: Jan 15], was stayed by the **Federal Appeals Court** after a coalition of consumer groups, including Consumer Federation of America, said the new prices were excessive.

Planes

• **Civil Aeronautics Board's (CAB) Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA)** has asked CAB to start a rulemaking procedure to require that charter flight tourists be compensated when their flights are cancelled by the direct airline. These flights include overseas military personnel charters, travel group charters, study group charters, inclusive tour charters,

(Continued next page)

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(over)

Rate Register

(continued)

one-stop-inclusive tour charters & special event charters.

According to existing rules, travelers on regular flights who are denied boarding because of overbooking are reimbursed for the full value of the first remaining flight coupon on their ticket (up to a maximum of \$200) if suitable alternative transportation cannot be arranged. (This is not a ticket refund—ticket can still be used on another flight or be redeemed for cash.)

CAB's OCA believes a similar situation should exist for charter passengers. If CAB decides to make such a proposal, consumers will be able to comment.

• On July 22, Pan American Airlines asked **Civil Aeronautics Board** (CAB) to approve a simplified fare package between points in the US & points in Europe & the Middle East. If approved, one of the features would allow charter groups to be carried on scheduled service under certain conditions.

• Sept. 13 is deadline for comments on **Civil Aeronautics Board's** (CAB) advance notice of proposed rulemaking that would require airlines to arrive at their destinations on time at least 75% of the time. "On time" means a plane would not arrive more than 15 minutes earlier or later than the airline's schedule indicated.

Present standard requires that airlines operate within elapsed time between a plane's departure & arrival. This means a plane on a 2-hour trip could leave late & arrive late & still be on time as long as it arrived at its destination 2 hours after departure.

Since late 1970, CAB has been publishing on-time performance figures (in terms of city pairs—that is, between New York & Chicago, for example) for nonstop trips between 100 city pairs that are more than 322 kilometers (200 miles) apart. In May, the list was expanded to include 200 city pairs. These figures are not based on elapsed time.

CAB is especially interested in receiving comments on the following points:

1. Is it necessary for CAB to impose minimum standards of on-time arrival performance?

2. Would airlines' actual on-time arrival performance be increased by schedule changes?

3. What are "permissible delays" that would not adversely affect an airline's on-time performance record?

4. Would flights be any less safe if airlines were obliged to adhere to proposed on-time performance standard?

Details—*Federal Register*: July 29, page 31568. Send comments to Docket 27891, Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428.

